



STATE OF HAWAII
Executive Office on Early Learning
2759 South King Street
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

February 17, 2024

TO: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: **Measure:** S.B. No. 3305 – RELATING TO EDUCATION
Hearing Date: Friday, February 23, 2024
Time: 10:30 a.m.
Location: Conference Room 211

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support

The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) is committed to expanding early learning opportunities for all keiki across the State and supports S.B. No. 3305 and defers to the Hawai'i Public Charter School Commission.

In addition to EOEL Public Prekindergarten programs, Charter schools also offer prekindergarten classrooms and opportunities. Supporting the expansion of these programs will assist the State in effectuating its goals to expand access to all 3- and 4-year-old children by 2032.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



CATHY K. IKEDA
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
(‘AHA KULA HO‘ĀMANA)

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>
1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1100, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

FOR: SB 3305 Relating to Education
DATE: February 23, 2024
TIME: 10:30 A.M.
COMMITTEE: Committee on Ways & Means
ROOM: Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
FROM: Ed H. Noh, Ed. D, Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to offer **SUPPORT on SB 3305** which amends Chapter 302D, the statutes governing public charter schools, by adding a new section applicable to Prekindergarten-only public charter schools. This section provides clarification on what sections of Chapter 302D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, Prekindergarten-only schools are exempt from.

For clarification, Prekindergarten-only public charter schools are public charter schools that only serve prekindergarten students and have no K-12 students. At its January 2024 general business meeting, the Commission approved the first Prekindergarten-only public charter school, PACT Parkway Villages Preschool.

The Commission is available to work with this committee, the DOE, and our public charter schools in moving this legislation forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: SB 3305 – in strong support

Hawai'i State Capitol, Conference Room 211

February 23, 2024, 10:30AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) Speaks!, mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT of Senate Bill 3305 relating to Education.**

Investing in early childhood education is crucial to fostering a more equitable future. Research consistently demonstrates the long-term benefits of early childhood education in fostering academic achievement, social-emotional development, and lifelong success.

This bill is a critical opportunity to create more access to much-needed, community-based prekindergarten programs across the state, thereby expanding access to high-quality early childhood education for our keiki. This bill allows for developing innovative approaches that meet the diverse needs of young learners and their families, ultimately enhancing prekindergarten education's overall quality and effectiveness within the charter school sector. This proactive approach addresses the immediate need for increased access to prekindergarten education and lays the groundwork for continued expansion and innovation in the years to come.

Mahalo for your leadership and commitment to improving access to early learning for all of our keiki. **Please pass SB 3305.**

Mahalo,

Chevelle Davis, MPH

Director of Early Childhood and Health Policy



**Parents And
Children Together**

**BUILDING THE RELATIONSHIPS
THAT MATTER MOST**

ParentsAndChildrenTogether.org

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 3305

TO: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki & Members,
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
FROM: Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO
DATE: February 23, 2024 at 10:30 AM

Parents And Children Together (PACT) supports SB 3305 Relating to Education, which requires all public charter schools that offer prekindergarten programs exclusively to adhere to the provisions of chapter 302D, HRS, with certain exceptions that align with the distinction between prekindergarten and other levels of education. PACT is aligned with the State Public Charter School Commission in establishing exemptions from certain sections of Chapter 302D as drafted in SB 3305 for prekindergarten only public charter schools.

Founded in 1968, PACT is a statewide community-based organization providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 15,000 people across the state annually, we help identify, address, and successfully resolve challenges through our 20 programs. Among our services are early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community building programs. Notably, PACT has decades of experience serving the community through Head Start prekindergarten classrooms.

In 2023, the opportunity to participate in the Ready Keiki initiative by applying for a prekindergarten only public charter school became available and in January 2024, PACT's application was approved. PACT Parkway Villages Preschool will offer four public prekindergarten classrooms, increasing access to quality pre-k education and building on PACT's many years of Head Start experience. We are currently working with the Commission to complete pre-opening assurances for the school.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org if you have any questions.